

Barbauld's *Richardson* and the Canonisation of Personal Character

On 4 September 1804, Richard Lovell Edgeworth wrote to Anna Letitia Barbauld to acquaint her with the attention that her recent edition of *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson* (1804) had received in the Edgeworth household:

We have read the greatest part of Richardson's Life and Correspondence. Your criticisms are excellent, and your censures of the indecent passages in your author are highly becoming and highly useful. . . . You have made R[ichardson] appear to great advantage, without using any of the unfaithful arts of an editor. You have shewn, that like other mortals, he had failings; but his enthusiasm for virtue, his generosity, and true politeness of heart and conduct, are brought so distinctly before the eye, that we love the man as much as we admire the author.¹

Loving "the man" and admiring "the author" here appear as complementary responses in the Edgeworth family's reading experience, a complementarity that is reflected in Richard Edgeworth's views on Barbauld's literary and biographical criticisms. In Edgeworth's reading of the "Life and Correspondence," the author and his novels merge, as do Barbauld's evaluations of Richardson's biographical and fictional narratives. Edgeworth thus shows himself a judicious

1. Anna Letitia Le Breton, *Memoir of Mrs. Barbauld, Including Letters and Notices of Her Family and Friends* (London, 1874), 94-5; my thanks to Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook for alerting me to this letter.

From Richard Edgeworth's comment in the same letter that the *Correspondence* "came to our hands long after Maria had written to you" (92) it appears that the Edgeworths probably acquired the six volumes in August 1804: "long" after Maria Edgeworth's previous letter to Barbauld (22 July) but with enough time for the family to read "the greatest part of Richardson's Life and Correspondence" before Richard Edgeworth wrote to Barbauld (4 September), assuming that Le Breton's dating in the *Memoir* is reliable.

and sensitive reader, for he both recognises and reproduces the critical strategies that Barbauld had employed in the *Correspondence*.² There, she had indeed availed herself of her prerogative as editor and “made R[ichardson] appear to great advantage” so that readers might “love the man as much as [they] admire the author.”³ In order to elicit such readerly love, one of her main

2. Little survives of the Barbauld archive, and none of it directly discusses her work on either the *Correspondence* or *The British Novelists*; see McCarthy, “A “High-Minded Christian Lady”: The Posthumous Reception of Anna Letitia Barbauld,” in *Romanticism and Women Poets: Opening the Doors of Reception*, ed. Harriet Kramer Linkin and Stephen C. Behrendt (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 180-82, and McCarthy, *Anna Letitia Barbauld: Voice of the Enlightenment* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), xvi, xviii. We know, however, that the London bookseller Richard Phillips had purchased the manuscript letters at auction in February 1804 and then hired Barbauld to select and edit letters for speedy publication; Barbauld may have had as little as three months to produce copy for the entire six-volume *Correspondence* (McCarthy, “What Did Anna Barbauld Do,” 193-4, 197-8). For discussions of the complex history of Richardson's correspondence, see especially *Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson*, ed. John Carroll (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 3-8; T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, *Samuel Richardson: A Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 436-9; McCarthy, “What Did Anna Barbauld Do,” 193-4, 202-5; and Peter Sabor, “Publishing Richardson's Correspondence: ‘The necessary office of selection’,” in *Samuel Richardson: Tercentenary Essays*, ed. Margaret Anne Doody and Sabor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 239-40.

3. By “the unfaithful arts of an editor” Edgeworth probably refers to the suppression of unflattering aspects of a life as well as to biographical practices that were coming into disrepute in the early nineteenth century: typological readings of the biographical subject's character; the distillation of a central passion; the interlarding of biographical and historical detail; or the foregrounding of the biographer's persona; see Richard D. Altick, *Lives and Letters: A History of Literary Biography in England and America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), esp. 181-232; and Francis R. Hart, *Lockhart as Romantic Biographer*

resources had been to represent Richardson as a benevolent, strict yet loving, patriarchal figure.⁴ As my discussion of Richardson's correspondence with Sarah Wescomb will show, Barbauld's editing and framing of the letters tended to emphasise "his generosity, and true politeness of heart and conduct" as "father" to a group of younger female correspondents he frequently called his "daughters." Barbauld's editorial interventions in Richardson's correspondence, I will argue, were designed to assure readers that the novelist's personal character (as displayed in his letters) corresponded to his authorial moral character (as inferred through his novels) in order to present him as an appropriate father of the modern British novel – a process that I call "the canonisation of personal character."⁵ As a consequence, I also propose that Barbauld's contributions to the

(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1971), 3-43. For short but insightful discussions of the permissible limits of editorial interventions in letters during the eighteenth century, see William McCarthy, *Hester Thrale Piozzi: Portrait of a Literary Woman* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 135-9; and McCarthy, "What Did Anna Barbauld Do to Samuel Richardson's Correspondence? A Study of Her Editing," *Studies in Bibliography* 54 (2001): 204-6.

4. Barbauld's institution of Richardson as the *father* of the modern British novel may thus also constitute an early resistance to the "feminization" of Richardson and his novels that Brian Corman has found in novel criticism and canon formation throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Corman, *Women Novelists Before Jane Austen* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008]).

5. While the study of "Lives" for the moral improvement of individuals was already by the eighteenth century a well-established pedagogical tool, the particular imbrications of an individual "Life" with national (literary) history that Barbauld foregrounds are specific to this period and receive special cogency in her editions of the *Correspondence* and *The British Novelists*. For a discussion of the increasing importance of domestic life and personal character to genres of life writing, see Mark Salber

elevation of novelistic reading and to the institution of the novel as a national literary genre – in the *Correspondence* as well as in her editorial prefaces to *The British Novelists* (1810) – have to be read in conjunction with her institution of Richardson as the first properly moral, modern novelist.⁶ Barbauld's *Correspondence* set out to demonstrate that Richardson's personal character founded as well as guaranteed the moral elevation of his novels. As Edgeworth indicated in his letter, life writing, textual criticism, and literary history were so intimately intertwined in Barbauld's treatment of Richardson and his writings that they mutually constituted and sustained each other.⁷

Phillips, *Society and Sentiment: Genres of Historical Writing in Britain, 1740-1820* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), esp. 131-46.

6. For extensive analyses of the “elevation of novelistic reading” and of “institutions of the novel”, see William B. Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684-1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); and Homer Obed Brown, *Institutions of the English Novel: From Defoe to Scott* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997). Mary Helen McMurrin's recent discussion of Barbauld's role in the institution of the novel revises the focus on national origins: McMurrin, “National or Transnational? The Eighteenth-Century Novel,” in *The Literary Channel: The Inter-National Invention of the Novel*, ed. Margaret Cohen and Carolyn Dever (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), esp. 53-61; and also see McMurrin, *The Spread of Novels: Translation and Prose Fiction in the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), esp. chapter 4, “The Cross-Channel Emergence of the Novel.”

7. The increasing imbrications of biography with various genres of history, beginning in the second half of the eighteenth century and extending through the Romantic period, have been documented by Hart, *Lockhart*, esp. 20-28; and Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, esp. 131-46, 295-321. Barbauld's pairing of biography, familiar letters, and literary history is embedded in the growing conviction that private lives

Fathering the Modern Novel

In placing Richardson's personal character at the centre of the novel's history, Barbauld pioneered a reconception of the relationship between novels, authors, and national culture that has frequently been identified with Walter Scott. Clifford Siskin, for example, sees a new kind of literary history emerging with Scott that "shifted attention and concern from writing to the writer" and in the process helped to canonise the professional writer of novels as a national cultural institution.⁸ Yet Michael Gamer is right to point out that Barbauld offered a literary history based on writers rather than writings over a decade before Scott foregrounded "specific

and public history reinforced and constituted each other. It also participates therefore in the foregrounding of the personality of exceptional individuals as both symptom and source of a nation's history espoused by Romantic biography and literary history alike (see Altick, *Lives and Letters*, esp. 77-90, 112-32; Hart, *Lockhart*, 24-43; and Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, 22-6).

8. Clifford Siskin, *The Work of Writing: Literature and Social Change in Britain, 1700-1830* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), esp. 186-7, 198-203, 206-9; quotation at 187. For other arguments in favour of Scott's prominent role in the nationalisation of the novel (variously conceived as "English" or "British"); the institution of the "modern" canon; the professionalization of the novelistic writer; and the rise of English Literature as a professionalised, academic discipline, see especially Brown, *Institutions*, 9-22, 179-88; Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 111-34; Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), esp. 116-48; Claudia L. Johnson, "'Let Me Make the Novels of a Country': Barbauld's *The British Novelists* (1810/1820)," *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 34, no. 2 (2001): 173-7; Jane Millgate, *Scott's Last Edition: A Study in Publishing History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1987); and Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, 14, 19-23.

novelists' careers" in *Ballantyne's Novelist's Library*.⁹ After all, the title of *The British Novelists* emphasised readers' access to authors over their novels. The literary-biographical prefaces that accompanied the reprinted novels in *The British Novelists*, moreover, and even more emphatically the "Life of Mr. Richardson" that prefaced the *Correspondence*, insisted on the importance of authors' personal characters to the moral configuration of their novels.¹⁰ Barbauld's discussion of the ethics of novelistic writing and reading within both publications recalled Enlightenment ideals of improvement in its focus on novels as media tools for the progressive reshaping of society. Her editorial apparatus as a whole, however, finally took a more Romantic turn by locating both the origins of that tool – the modern British novel – and the guarantee of its morally salutary development within the personal characters of individual writers.

At the heart of Barbauld's shift in attention from texts to authors lay a recalibration of the relations between novels, readers, and character that was specific to the early-Romantic reconfiguration and "rise" of novels. Beginning in the 1790s, Siskin argues, novels incorporated (and thus assumed some of the functions of) the genre he calls "system": "a form of writing that was crucially important" to "the production and circulation of knowledge" in the eighteenth

9. Michael Gamer, "A Select Collection: Barbauld, Scott, and the Rise of the (Reprinted) Novel," in *Recognizing the Romantic Novel: New Histories of British Fiction, 1780-1830*, ed. Jillian Heydt-Stevenson and Charlotte Sussman (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010), 182-3; the quotation is from Johnson, "Barbauld's *The British Novelists*," 173.

10. Barbauld drew heavily on the *Correspondence*'s literary-historical materials and on her "Life" of Richardson to produce the history of the novel and the biographical essay on Richardson that introduced the first volume of *The British Novelists*; the paratexts of these two collections can be considered as a coherent body of work on novelistic fiction and their authors.

century because it offered “comprehensive knowledge of a world that *could* be known – of parts that formed a whole.”¹¹ This “embedding of system” in Romantic novels “put the concept of ‘character’ . . . into a new relationship to the ‘things’ ordered by system” because novelistic characters now directly developed out of and fed back into the self-referential worlds that these novels displayed to their readers.¹² Those worlds, moreover, were both fictional and “real” in the sense that they presented accounts of the developments and interactions of fictional characters while at the same time claiming to systematically explain the relations and events – “things as they are” – that constituted the reader’s world. As a consequence, novels became laboratories of character that incorporated readers as their objects of study and as their operators at the same time. The Romantic institution of the novel thus occurred within a feedback loop in which readers, novels, and the figures that populated them interpolated each other in the name of a progressive narrative of character development.

As Michael Gamer’s work on Barbauld’s achievements in editing *The British Novelists* suggests, moreover, novels were not the only form of writing in which the genre of system was being embedded in the Romantic period. Defining the “select collection” as a form that “merged the discriminating practices of the anthology with the representative claims of the collection,” Gamer argues that a collection like *The British Novelists* “functions as a complex system” because it reorganizes the relations between its components to form “a ‘new whole’ that has the

11. Siskin, “Novels and Systems,” *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 34, no. 2 (Spring 2001): 202, 209; and Siskin, “Mediated Enlightenment: The System of the World,” in *This Is Enlightenment*, ed. Siskin and William Warner (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 165 (emphasis in original).

12. Siskin, “Novels and Systems,” 211.

power to exceed its parts and supersede the original contexts of those parts.”¹³ By embedding reprinted novels within an editorial framework that historically, ethically, and aesthetically re-evaluated them, Barbauld therefore retroactively imported the Romantic reconfiguration of novels as self-sustaining character generators into the reading of British novels in general. And just as the blending of novel and system rearticulated the connections between readers and characters, so the embedding of novel, system, and literary-biographical criticism within a single collection reshaped the discursive field within which readers, authors, novels, and characters associated with each other. In the early nineteenth century, in other words, the entire body of writing that Siskin has elsewhere called “novelism” began to function as a system.¹⁴

Small wonder, then, that writers rather than texts take center stage in Barbauld's histories of the novel. In fact, her turn to authors as the proper subjects of literary history coincides with her account of the advent of the “modern novel” in Britain. While the work of individual writers provides the material for Barbauld's literary history and criticism prior to that point, the writers themselves generally appear as exponents rather than originators of a specific “style” or “species of . . . composition.”¹⁵ Christoph Martin Wieland thus furnishes the pattern of “the German

13. Gamer, “A Select Collection,” 162.

14. See Siskin, *Work of Writing*, 172-5.

15. Barbauld, “On the Origin and Progress of Novel-Writing,” in *The British Novelists; with an Essay, and Prefaces Biographical and Critical*, ed. Barbauld, vol. 1 (London, 1810), 19, 22 (hereafter cited in the text as “Origin”). Barbauld's earlier version of the novel's history in the “Life” of Richardson usually focuses on “kinds” of fiction and their exponents; see Barbauld, “Life of Samuel Richardson, With Remarks on His Writings,” in *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson, Author of “Pamela,” “Clarissa,” and “Sir Charles Grandison.” Selected from the Original Manuscripts, Bequeathed by Him*

writers of philosophical romances” whereas Friedrich Maximilian von Klinger “is an author who deals in the horrid” and thus exemplifies the writer of gothic fiction: “He subsists on murders and atrocities of all sorts, and introduces devils and evil spirits amongst his personages” (“Origin,” 32). Even “the most eloquent writer in the most eloquent modern language,” Jean-Jacques Rousseau, cannot escape the status of specimen though he stands “At the head of writers of this class [i.e., French novelists]” (20), while early British novelists like Eliza Haywood wrote “in the style of Mrs. Behn’s” (37) and are therefore to be considered “licentious” (36).

This history of novelistic subgenres and their exponents changes, however, at the moment that ingenious individuals transform the novel in Britain: “The first author we had, who distinguished himself by natural painting, was that truly original genius De Foe [sic]” (“Life,” xix-xx). After Defoe, that is, the modernized British novel follows the innovations of original authors rather than the revolutions of literary trends. In the “Life,” this narrative of individualization of course directly prepares for Samuel Richardson’s role in the reform of the British novel: “if from any one Richardson caught, in some measure, his peculiar manner of writing, to [Defoe] it must be traced, whose Robinson Crusoe and Family Instructor . . . he must have read in his youth” (xx). Besides marking the point in Barbauld’s literary history at which the development of the novel begins to be driven by authors rather than networks of writers, texts, and readers, Defoe thus also founds an authorial lineage and establishes a line of influence that carries the novel through Richardson into modernity.

Yet we can already detect some hedging on Barbauld’s part, a hesitation to fully institute Defoe as the originator of the modern British novel. She suggests that Richardson may not have

to His Family. To Which Are Prefixed, A Biographical Account of That Author, and Observations on His Writings, ed. Barbauld, vol. 1 (London, 1804), xiv-xviii (hereafter cited in the text as “Life”).

“caught . . . his peculiar manner of writing” “from any one” at all. However, “if” he was indeed influenced by Defoe “in some measure,” it may have been through the heavily mediated recollection of books “read in his youth” several decades earlier. Richardson thus emerges as yet another new beginning – a second originator of the now completely reformed, modernized British novel who displaces all ancestors and denies all lineages: “Richardson was the man who was to introduce a new kind of moral painting; he drew equally from nature and from his own ideas” (xx-xxi).¹⁶ In so far as Richardson’s “own ideas” may have been formed by the books he “read in his youth,” Defoe could be said to haunt this second narrative of origins, but his influence is doubtful and placed under erasure. Barbauld’s narrative consequently establishes the history of the modern British novel through Defoe and simultaneously insulates him from it in favour of an originally, individually creative Richardson.

Barbauld further refined this doubled lineage in the more extensive history of the modern novel that she presented in the “Origins” essay. There, the novel’s history from Defoe onwards turns into an “enumeration” (“Origins,” 46) of individual novelists and their texts that “deserve to be mentioned, either for their excellence or the singularity of their plan” (38). Beyond these qualifications, they appear singularly unrelated to each other, disconnected from the sort of genre-driven narrative that informed the earlier part of Barbauld’s essay. This individuation and fragmentation of the novel’s history appears to begin with Defoe and emanates from there through the rest of Barbauld’s account. Too “original” for his own good, Defoe fails to secure a novelistic lineage for himself and his works because, as Barbauld informs us, “His *Robinson Crusoe* is to this day an *unique* in its kind” (37; emphasis in original). Defoe’s originality and

16. On the repeated declarations of “new beginnings” in the canonisation of (the history of) the novel and Defoe’s complex institution-under-erasure within that process, see Brown, *Institutions*, 171-202.

innovation, in other words, fail to attract followers or encourage imitation and therefore insulate him from the blend of *Bildungsroman* and conversion narrative through which Barbauld filters the novel's literary history. It thus remains for Richardson to father the dynasty of modern British novelists:

At length, in the reign of George the Second, Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett, appeared in quick succession; and their success raised such a demand for this kind of entertainment [the novel], that it has ever since been furnished from the press, rather as a regular and necessary supply, than as an occasional gratification. (38)

To be a literary as well as economic success, the novel requires the institution of a second founder and renewer, one who will successfully produce successors (novelists as well as novels) to create and supply new markets for a new form of entertainment.

In order to present him as the true father of the modern British novel, however, Barbauld also needed to show that, though his writing generated a multitudinous progeny of imitations and remixes, its innovating sources properly belonged to Richardson alone: "From the world about him he took the incidents, manners, and general character, of the times in which he lived, and from his own beautiful ideas he copied that sublime of virtue which charms us in his *Clarissa*" ("Life," xxi). On this account, Richardson drew on a commonly available world for the settings, events, and exterior circumstances of his novels, whereas the moral values of his characters and the moral effects of his novels could only arise out of the personal qualities and specific character of the author himself. In Barbauld's formulation, the moral effects of novelistic reading

therefore came to be connected with, even guaranteed by, the personal character of the novelistic writer.¹⁷

Richard Edgeworth's critical reading of the "Life," with which I began this article, is thus particularly incisive. Though commenting on a text, Edgeworth almost exclusively focuses on the person represented within that text. The diachronic view of a life offered within biography is accordingly elided, condensed into a synchronic portrait of Richardson's timeless qualities. Moreover, Edgeworth specifically praises Richardson's moral and personal qualities, his personal character, which he opposes to Richardson's professional character as an "author." At the same time, however, he also acknowledges the ways in which, in Barbauld's portrait, personal and professional character mutually constitute each other. Edgeworth recognised that Barbauld helped Richardson "appear to great advantage" as a British author by intervening in readers' perceptions of his personal character, isolating and foregrounding personal qualities as well as faults that would heighten readers' emotional identifications with the writer. Barbauld's project to institutionalise Richardson as the father of the modern novel therefore entailed the canonisation of his personal character, which Barbauld founded in part on Richardson's moral authority over the domestic life of his extended family. Yet in moralising the modern novel by

17. This perspective notwithstanding, Barbauld judged in the "Life" that "The moral of [*Pamela*] is more dubious than, in his life time, the author's friends were willing to allow" ("Life," lxiii) and subsequently excluded it from her canon of the modern British novel in *The British Novelists*. As Thomas Keymer and Peter Sabor have remarked, this decision illustrates well the continued debate over the merits and moral tendencies of Richardson's first novel more than six decades after it had first been published; see Keymer and Sabor, "*Pamela*" in *the Marketplace: Literary Controversy and Print Culture in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), esp. 211-12.

emphasising the moral exemplarity of its “father,” Barbauld also affirmed (however guardedly) Richardson's particular brand of authoritative parenting.

Moralising the Father: The Character of a Patriarch

Richardson certainly liked to see himself in the role of benevolent patriarch whose sage advice guided friends and family in their social and moral duties.¹⁸ He conceived of his circle of correspondents as an extended family and encouraged individual correspondents – in particular his younger female acquaintances – to relate to him as their father, they his children. He thus called Lady Dorothy Bradshaigh “a daughter of [his] own mind,”¹⁹ while Susanna Highmore

18. Throughout this article, I read Richardson's views on parenting, family structure, and a father's authority as following ideologies of the “benevolent, paternalistic, and ‘enlightened’ Lockean patriarchs” outlined in Eve Tavor Bannet, *The Domestic Revolution: Enlightenment Feminisms and the Novel* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), esp. 24-30, 50-55; quotation at 30. We already know, of course, that Richardson's novels were designed to offer moral guidance to a broad readership. For studies of moral advice and education in *Clarissa* in particular, see esp. Kevin L. Cope, “Richardson the Advisor,” in *New Essays on Samuel Richardson*, ed. Albert J. Rivero (London: Macmillan, 1996), 17-33; Thomas Keymer, *Richardson's “Clarissa” and the Eighteenth-Century Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); and Warner, *Reading “Clarissa”: The Struggles of Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979). For a study of paternal authority and patriarchal economies in the extended families of Richardson's novels, see Jerry C. Beasley, “Richardson's Girls: The Daughters of Patriarchy in *Pamela*, *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison*,” in *New Essays on Samuel Richardson*, 35-52.

19. Correspondence of Samuel Richardson, Forster MS 457, vol. XI, fol. 153r, National Arts Library, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK; hereafter cited as Forster, followed by volume and folio

wrote to Hester Mulso from Richardson's house at North End that "our honoured papa, Richardson, I flatter myself is better, and gives us his company."²⁰ And Richardson never tired of quoting to correspondents their or his own iterations of their familial relationship. He remarked to Lady Bradshaigh on "the pleasure you do me the honour to own you have in being called 'The daughter of my own mind and heart'" (*Correspondence* 4:256, 6 June 1753) and half-mockingly complained that Susanna Highmore and other female correspondents neglect to write to him, "yet call me papa, boast of filial regards, and so forth: yet, dotard as I am, I cannot forbear priding myself in my girls" (*Correspondence* 2:287, 15 July 1753). His oddly solipsistic remark to Lady Bradshaigh suggests something of the iterative nature of the familial relationships that Richardson sought to create within and through his correspondence, and some of it also reverberates in his comments to Highmore. Indeed, Richardson's fondness for declarations of filial and parental affection in letters relied for its sustenance on the repeated assertion of familial relations between correspondents. These assertions were the instruments with which Richardson and his female correspondents rang changes on the themes of domestic affection and paternal authority.

numbers. In all transcriptions from letters in this collection, I have retained the manuscript's palaeographic features (such as underlining for emphasis). All excerpts are reproduced with the kind permission of the Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

20. *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson, Author of "Pamela," "Clarissa," and "Sir Charles Grandison."* Selected from the Original Manuscripts, Bequeathed by Him to His Family. To Which Are Prefixed, A Biographical Account of That Author, and Observations on His Writings, ed. Barbauld (London, 1804), 2:258, n.d. (hereafter cited as *Correspondence* followed by volume and page numbers as well as, where appropriate, the date Barbauld assigned each letter).

As a consequence, the domestic economy of Richardson's extended family rested on the perpetual re-imagination of his extended domestic circle. Each iteration of familial relations between him and one of his correspondents required at the same time the invocation of a domestic scene, the production of an image of a father-child pairing – a conversation piece *en miniature*, if you will.²¹ Such repetition invariably resulted in some modification of the proposed domestic scene, or it occurred in reaction to some (perceived or actual) change in the relation between correspondents. It is thus not surprising that many of Richardson's re-imagined domestic scenes followed or were marshalled as rhetorical weapons within arguments with one of his "daughters."

One of these scenes appeared in a letter from Richardson to Susanna Highmore, in which he rebuked her for not visiting him at his house in North End:

I was really half angry with you; and yet it was very impertinent in me to be so, when your papa and mama so chearfully gave in to your journey. But selfishness governs us all: and on this occasion I had a large share of it, having proposed to myself, and for my wife and girls . . . a good deal of your company at North End: and people, who by infirmities

21. Lynn Shepherd's argument that Richardson used "versions and inversions of the 'conversation piece' as a powerful metaphor for the articulation of authority and feeling within the family" in *Clarissa* (452) helps to contextualise my sense of his "imaging" of parent-child relations in his correspondence; see Lynn Shepherd, "'Our family has indeed been strangely discomposed': Samuel Richardson, Joseph Highmore and the Conversation Piece in *Clarissa*," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 31, no. 3 (2008): 451-72.

and advanced life, are verging – in short, such people don't care to be deprived of what they think will give them pleasure while here. (*Correspondence* 2:232-3, 4 June 1750)²²

This example demonstrates particularly well the iterative quality of Richardson's familial circles. He had originally "proposed to [him]self" – that is, envisioned – a scene of domestic happiness incorporating members of both his biological and extended families. That vision now has to bow to the realities of prior engagements and alternative plans, but it still serves Richardson as a rhetorical tool to assert his authority as patriarch of an extended family: since he has imagined a domestic scene including Highmore, she should obey his rather than her own desires and thereby complete his vision. Small wonder, then, that the domestic scenes and epistolary relations imagined in Richardson's letters always remained focused on and oriented towards Richardson himself. His odd jealousy was in fact an integral part of his repetition of affective bonds, of the perpetual reproduction of his extended "family" within his letters. Richardson appears to have perceived a need to continuously reiterate the familial relations he would like to see operate. For that purpose he imagined scenes of domestic happiness and sociable exchange within a small circle, and then asked his correspondents to validate them both in word and deed. But since in his "family" all filial relations were oriented towards him, since all paternal authority derived from

22. For another example, see Richardson's letter of 2 August 1757 to Hester Mulso: "I was greatly disappointed in missing you at [illegible] Place, when, with a good deal of Difficulty, I reached there. An Appointment to be sure, thought I, an indispensable one, and of long standing (tho' Mr. Edward Mulso was not quite sure you would all go) or else the dear Family having so little time on their Hands, being so soon to separate (some to Canterbury) would have beat their Course to Parson's-Green. Have they not near Relations there? A Mamma, a Papa (It was Saturday) Sisters? And is it not a great while since they saw a Place, once more favoured by them? — I was tired, disappointed; tho' I endeavoured to carry it off as well as I could before good Mrs. Donne" (National Library of Scotland, MS. 582:595, fol. 31r).

and was exerted by him, the familial circle of Richardson's correspondents and readers needed to be centred on and arranged around him – it could not tolerate any rivals.

In the *Correspondence*, Barbauld made use of and even amplified Richardson's vision of an extended family focused on him as its patriarchal head and founded on domestic affect. Her heightened representation of Richardson as benevolent patriarch of an extended family that included eager readers of his novels allowed Barbauld to simultaneously strengthen her assertion of the morality of Richardson's personal and professional characters. In the "Life," Barbauld thus assured her readers that "The house of Richardson was a school of virtuous sentiment and good morals" ("Life," clxv). She then quoted at length from a letter written by Leipzig bookseller Erasmus Reich during a short visit to London, in order to demonstrate the regularity and propriety that supposedly characterised all of Richardson's domestic arrangements:

He gave me a reception worthy of the author of Pamela, Clarissa, and Grandison; that is, with the same heart which appears throughout his works. His person, his family, and even his domestics, all answer this character. He carried me into his library, and his printing-house . . . , in both which I never saw things so well disposed. Sunday following, I was with him at his country-house . . . where his family was, with some ladies, acquaintances of his four daughters, who, with his lady, compose his family. It was there I saw beauties without affectation; wit without vanity Here are to be seen no counterfeits, such as are the offspring of vanity, and the delight of fools. A noble simplicity reigns throughout, and elevates the soul Trained up by a parent who instructs them, still more by his example than by his works, [the ladies] strive to imitate him; and, if you feel a tenderness for objects so lovely, you will surely be sensible of a still greater respect for them.

("Life," clxvi-clxviii)

On Reich's representation, Richardson's household – an extended family that includes “acquaintances of his four daughters,” “domestics,” and workers in his print shop – is one of virtuous transparency and affective instruction. Reich proposes that the “harmony of this charming family” is founded on a combination of Richardson's moral example, his affective pedagogy, and the moral instruction offered by his novels. These three influences on Richardson's “family” perpetually inform and constitute each other: his young female protégés “strive to imitate” both Richardson and his novels; the efficacy of his example is grounded in his moral character and “simplicity;” and his character in turn affirms and produces the moral tendencies of his novels. Within this feedback loop involving character, pedagogy, and novelistic fiction, Barbauld established the moral ground on which her canonisation of the author's personal character would rest.

Within the correspondence proper, Barbauld therefore assembled letters that would confirm the image of Richardson as a benevolent patriarch and morally instructive father of an extended family of daughters, and devoted much of the six-volume *Correspondence* to Richardson's exchanges with (usually much younger) female correspondents.²³ Richardson's correspondence with women like Lady Bradshaigh, Susanna Highmore, Hester Mulso, and Sarah Wescomb

23. Thomas Keymer's charge that Richardson's “reputation for fatuous and condescending authoritarianism is largely owing” to “the undue prominence” Barbauld accorded Richardson's “at once inhibited and patronising” letters to younger women (Keymer, *Richardson's “Clarissa”*, 64) thus already suggests the need to investigate the editorial decisions and representational effects that might motivate such a partial arrangement. It should also be noted that, while Richardson freely gave paternalistic advice to his younger male correspondents as well, both his assertions of paternal authority and Barbauld's interventions in their correspondence were considerably less heavy-handed than with his female correspondents.

accordingly followed a similar pattern in the *Correspondence*. In each case, Barbauld portrayed Richardson as a generous teacher who instructed through debate, at the same time that she always took care to establish his final authority over his correspondents and their topics of discussion. Yet in order to support her representation of Richardson as a benevolent patriarch, Barbauld frequently had to read with Richardson and against his occasionally resistant “daughters,” which I propose to illustrate in the remainder of this article in Richardson’s correspondence with Sarah Wescomb. This correspondence, which shows some of the heaviest editing that can unambiguously be ascribed to Barbauld, displays editing patterns that characterise Barbauld’s approach to Richardson as patriarch of his familial circle, of the modern British novel, and of British literature as a whole.²⁴

Authorising the Father: The Limits of Female Response

Between 15 October 1750 and 25 January 1751, Richardson and Wescomb engaged in an epistolary quarrel that originated in disappointed hopes for a sociable visit but soon involved issues of filial duty and parental authority. The disagreement had begun with Wescomb’s visit with the Richardsons at North End; her subsequent extended stay with friends, the Jodrell family, at Ankerwyke in Buckinghamshire; and her neglect to write to Richardson while there, or to return to North End after her sojourn. Wescomb’s missed opportunity to visit the Richardsons

24. As William McCarthy’s excellent work on Richardson’s surviving letters has shown, arguments regarding Barbauld’s role in editing the *Correspondence* need to be made with extreme care and an awareness of her circumscribed, frequently obscured agency (see McCarthy, “What Did Anna Barbauld Do,” esp. 192-202, 206-8). I have therefore restricted my analysis to letters for which surviving manuscript copies show emendations or deletions that can unmistakably be attributed to Barbauld.

again would probably have resulted in one of Richardson's usual rebukes on such occasions in any case. Yet two comments in Wescomb's initial letter irritated Richardson particularly and heightened the perceived lapse in filial duties. The first remark, Wescomb's complaint regarding Richardson's failure to fulfil what she had taken to be a promise, occurs at the end of the letter:

I can now no longer forbear saying to my dear papa, that I do not think he did well by his poor girl, in not coming, though but for a day, to Ankerwyke, while I was there, and so fully depended on you; especially when I, out of punctilio, would not go there till after my visit to North-End.

You see how saucy I am in thus making you accountable to me; but as it is not the first instance, by many, that I have given of it, and been forgiven, I presume upon obtaining it now from my dear papa. . . . (*Correspondence* 3:284-5, 15 October 1750)

According to Wescomb, Richardson has failed to discharge his parental and social obligations by not returning the favour he owed her for remaining with his family. Wescomb quickly mutes her critique, however, by casting herself as a "saucy" daughter who overturns familial structures "in thus making you accountable to me" but whose refractoriness has "been forgiven" on several past occasions. Wescomb's critique stands, but it is also, in this letter, framed as a momentary unruliness that will soon be contained by the power relations of Richardson's patriarchal "family."²⁵

25. Kathryn Steele's excellent analysis of those amongst Richardson's (female) correspondents whose "rhetorical strategies provide evidence of a form of reading that, Anna Howe-like, negotiates interpretive authority" in the service of their "limited interpretive authority" (154) informs my reading of this exchange; see Kathryn L. Steele, "Navigating Interpretive Authorities: Women Readers and

The letter as it appeared in the *Correspondence* thus created the impression that Wescomb's "saucy" rebuke to Richardson was a temporary infraction against patriarchal family relations by an otherwise dutifully submissive daughter. After describing Ankerwyke and recounting her experiences there, Wescomb further assures Richardson:

And now I will submit readily to your decision, whether these were censurable amusements or not; for am I not your daughter, and permitted by adoption to call you father? Therefore is it not consistent with my duty to recount ingenuously all that passes? (*Correspondence* 3:284)

Here reappears the domestic scene so often imagined by Richardson that represents him as *pater familias* dispensing advice and moral judgments to his daughters, "adopted" or otherwise. Yet Barbauld edited the text of this letter in order to retain the appearance of such a relationship between Richardson and Wescomb, by cutting two important questions from the end of the passage just quoted:

And by y^e same Tie does it not equally lie on you, good Sir, to condemn, or not? And how is this to be done, if you are so indifferent as not to wish to be informed, or I on my Part am not frank and open? (Forster XIV.3, f. 58r)

Originally, then, Wescomb had perceived a lack of reciprocity in epistolary communication as much as in such social gestures as visiting, and she had reminded Richardson that his parental duties should balance her filial duties. Her complaint that he did not seem interested in hearing of her activities, and that he thereby neglected to perform his paternal role as moral guide, formed a counterpoint to her duties of epistolary sincerity and filial submission to his guidance. Barbauld's

Reading Models in the Eighteenth Century" (PhD diss., Rutgers University, 2008), 149-207; and, for fictional readers, Steele, "Clarissa's Silence," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 23, no. 1 (Fall 2010): 1-34.

deletion thus restricted this familial relationship to one in which paternal authority and filial obedience were occasionally challenged but always finally reasserted.

Barbauld even extended this view of the relationship between Richardson and Wescomb to the materials that framed the *Correspondence*. In her biographical sketches of Richardson's correspondents that close the "Life" she primed readers' approaches to the Richardson-Wescomb correspondence by offering an extremely reductive portrait of Wescomb and her letters: "Miss WESTCOMBE's [sic] letters shew great sweetness, modesty, and the highest reverence for her adopted father" ("Life," cxcix). The passage entirely elides Wescomb's resistance (however occasional) to Richardson's paternal control and establishes familial power relations that place Richardson at the centre and in control of his extended family. Barbauld's biographical sketch of Wescomb – as of other young female correspondents of Richardson – thus obscures the tensions over patriarchal authority and filial duty that occasionally erupt in the original correspondence by excising objections or by reading them from Richardson's point of view.²⁶

The *Correspondence* thus not surprisingly emphasises Richardson's perspective on the quarrel over parental and filial duties by supporting Richardson's rejection of Wescomb's objections. His first letter in response to her charges thus opens in incredulity, with an accusation: "Was there ever such a daughter heard of as my Miss Westcomb [sic], to know herself to be in fault; and yet to take none upon herself, and lay it all upon her papa!" (*Correspondence* 3:285-6, 1 November 1750). Not only does he reject her points of critique outright, he also displaces her complaint with one of his own that is designed to establish her

26. In the same vein, Barbauld informed readers that Hester Mulso "was a favourite correspondent of Richardson; he loved to draw out her reasoning powers, then beginning to unfold themselves" ("Life," cxcvii), a portrait of their relationship that rendered Mulso dependent on Richardson's pedagogy.

neglect of filial duties. A veritable catalogue of Wescomb's omissions follows: she left North End too soon and deprived the Richardsons of the pleasure of her company; she stayed too long at Ankerwyke; she did not write to Richardson during her stay despite promising to do so; and she did not visit the Richardsons again on her return to her family home. Wescomb's rebuke of Richardson, however, weighs the heaviest with him: "I should not have said half so much, had I not been so strongly challenged for supposed defects, when my girl only was in fault"

(*Correspondence* 3:292). This and Richardson's next letter in this quarrel are primarily aimed at re-establishing patriarchal family relations. To that end he transforms the terms of their debate by insisting on a relationship between father and daughter grounded in the father's duty (as well as right) to correct the child's faults and in the daughter's duty to submit to her parent's strictures. Richardson's assertion that "it is the part, it is the duty of a father . . . to tell his children of their faults," and his naming Wescomb "My half, my almost-half, good girl" (*Correspondence* 3:293) indicate that familial harmony will only be re-established once she has submitted to his judgment and thereby underwritten the patriarchal *status quo*.

In this spirit, Richardson reprimands Wescomb in another letter dated 5 December 1750, in which he enumerates her failures to fulfil her filial duties: her desertion of the Richardsonian household for her "own Pleasure's sake;" her apparent preference of Ankerwyke (and Enfield) over North End; and above all her unwillingness to concede these faults or to accept his criticism. This last aspect of Wescomb's temporary resistance against Richardson's patriarchal control draws his strongest condemnation, and leads him to reassert his paternal authority in the strongest terms:

Well, but after all this, to upbraid me with Unkindness to you! And to pity yourself; and to call yourself my poor Girl! – that was the best of it! – Do you think I did not value you

enough to be angry at you? to chide you? – Were you a Queen, my Dear, and on your Throne, in all your Royalty, and allowed me to call you Daughter, you should not have Reason to reproach me for want of paternal Duty, in not telling you of your Faults. And surely, when you have so few Faults to be told of, when by long Study and Watchfulness over you a Fault is found, you need not grudge to be told of it. (Forster XIV.3, fol. 63v)

For Richardson, gender and age trump social rank in a father's patriarchal right and duty to correct the behaviour of his daughter. His censure, he argues, expresses his estimation of her and simultaneously indicates her social and moral excellence since he so rarely finds fault with her. At the same time, Richardson's criticism also functions as a measure of Wescomb's compliance with patriarchal family structures, for it both demands and models her submission to his judgment. His censure of her behaviour is accordingly the reverse as well as the logical extension of the praise he lavishes on the "daughter[s] of [his] own mind and heart" at other times: both ensures his daughters' persistent indebtedness to his paternal attentions. The scenes of familial reunification that Richardson paints for Wescomb therefore primarily serve to remind her of what she has failed to do, of her neglect of her filial duties, and of the shape that her actions should have taken to reflect and perform his envisioned familial *tableau*.

Wescomb, however, points out repeatedly that she feels misrepresented and mistreated by Richardson. Describing herself as "still very affectionate, yet hardly-treated," she asserts that Richardson's disappointment and hurt feelings should in large part be attributed to misunderstandings, mistakes, and unlucky circumstances, but in no case to her ill will or neglect of filial duties (*Correspondence* 3:297, 23 November 1750). Wescomb accordingly represents Richardson's reprimands as ill-humoured attacks on her: "I have heard of dipping one's pen in gall: O that I had a little gall by me now, instead of harmless ink! Do, pray, Sir, send me some

against next time; as you have, I believe, to spare" (*Correspondence* 3:295). The post script reinforces the same point: "How have you teased me, you dear naughty Sir, you! My poor mamma, and all here, suffer for it. She asks me, what makes me so fretful and peevish? I answer, Papa" (*Correspondence* 3:298). In this view, it is Richardson's scolding letter to Wescomb rather than Wescomb's supposed neglect of her filial duties that disturbs proper familial relations and consequentially authorises her own retort.

Wescomb's perception of her quarrel with her "papa" and of its effects on their familial relations in fact modulates into a charge frequently levelled against Richardson by his female correspondents: that he deliberately misreads their views to argue his point.²⁷ Richardson had suggested in an earlier letter that Wescomb's description of her time at Ankerwyke showed her preference of that place over North End; Wescomb retorts angrily:

Whatever I urged on this Occasion were [sic] very far from being designed as a

Reflection upon the Entertainment and Pleasures I met with at N. End. Indeed this was an ill-natured Construction, and what I could never have thought you would have believed

27. For other instances in which female correspondents charge Richardson with deliberately misreading their letters, see Lady Bradshaigh's letter of 29 March 1751 (*Correspondence* 6:90); and Hester Mulso Chapone, "Letters on Filial Obedience," in *Bluestocking Feminism: Writers of the Bluestocking Circle, 1738-1785*, gen. ed. Gary Kelly (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999), 3:242. Mulso's critical reading of Richardson's ideas on parental authority and Richardson's response in *Sir Charles Grandison* have been carefully analyzed in Megan Hiatt, "Establishing the Parental Authority: Hester Mulso's 'Letters on Filial Obedience', *Sir Charles Grandison*, and the Marriage Act of 1753" (forthcoming). Hiatt's account of the debate between Richardson and Mulso reveals important parallels to the quarrel between Richardson and Wescomb, and seems to indicate patterns of argument at work across Richardson's correspondence with his younger female protégés.

me capable of. But how much more charitable had it been to think rather too favourably, tho' almost against Judgment, than be severely just!

Yet here I may call that in question; since you wronged me in this your Letter (your ill-natured Letter, as I was ready to call it); for how cruelly has it pulled mine in Pieces! not dissected, but tortured and mangled! Poor thing! it was so disfigured after passing your Hand, I should scarce have known it again; my best Meanings so perverted, and my artless Excuses, by a naughty Ing[en]uity, turned against me (Hard! how hard!); which even you, Sir, with all this Mischief in your Head, have been, I find, not a little puzzled to make out; for you could not but understand me: Yes, you surely did: You knew my Intentions; and that they meant very differently from the Interpretation you have put on them. Fie! fie! Sir: Did I ever see such a Daughter? you ask me. Indeed, I may reply, I never saw such a Papa! (Forster XIV.3, fol. 61r)

Richardson's response had "pulled [Wescomb's letter] in Pieces" by excerpting lengthy passages and then commenting on them. Wescomb insists that Richardson's treatment of her letter does not merely constitute a clinical dissection for argumentative or didactic purposes. Instead, she portrays his epistolary practice as excessive violence to her letter, to her arguments, and to herself. "Tortured and mangled," letter and arguments have been "so disfigured" and her "best Meanings so perverted" that she barely recognises herself in Richardson's reading. Wescomb locates Richardson's motivation for such violence against her in his personal character. For her, Richardson's "ill-natured" criticism indicates a constitutional petulance that exceeds the temporary conditions of their quarrel and colours the general tenor of their familial relations. Richardson's quarrelsome "nature" in fact marks him as an un-natural father in Wescomb's letter, for his epistolary violence also violates the affective relations that hold families together.

By inverting his formula of reproach – “Did I ever see such a Daughter? you ask me. Indeed, I may reply, I never saw such a Papa!” – Wescomb suggests that Richardson isolates himself from his extended family and impedes their open, sincere correspondence by giving free rein to “all this Mischief in [his] Head.” By implication, it requires the intervention of a truly dutiful (though not necessarily quiescent) daughter to recover “such a Papa” to the affective bonds of his extended family.

Readers of the *Correspondence*, however, encountered a very different version of the quarrel. Amongst other alterations, Barbauld cut Wescomb's accusation that it was Richardson's querulous “nature” and epistolary violence, rather than her unwillingness to submit to his criticism, which endangered familial harmony. Wescomb's letter as it appears in the *Correspondence* still had some sharp remarks for Richardson, amongst them her complaint that he deliberately misread her arguments in order to counter them. But her charges as presented by Barbauld largely support the basic premises on which Richardson's views on paternal authority are based. Wescomb's letter was thus reduced to quarrelling with Richardson's rhetorical and pedagogical strategies, a confrontation that contained the argument entirely within the purview of his patriarchal familial model. As a consequence, his reply countered her complaints effectively and thereby re-established his familial and moral authority.

This is not to say that Barbauld sanitises Richardson's image or idealises his paternal and patriarchal qualities. At various points in the “Life,” Barbauld discusses what she perceives as Richardson's flaws: his love of praise, especially for the moral exemplarity of his writing; the “mean opinion” of women that occasionally appears in his writing; and above all his overly

strict, excessively formal approach to parenthood.²⁸ On this last point she judges him by referring to contemporary views on pedagogy in which her own pedagogical practices are embedded:

Richardson was a careful, kind father, and a good husband in essentials; but, it must be confessed, there appears to have been a certain formality and stiffness of manner, but ill calculated to invite his children to that familiarity and confidence, which is so lovely when it does take place, but which frequently fails to do so, even when there is real affection, between such relations. Of this he was himself sufficiently sensible, and often laments it Besides, he not only had high notions of filial as well as conjugal obedience, but expected all those reverential demonstrations of it in the outward behaviour, which are now, whether wisely or not I will not pretend to determine, so generally laid aside. ("Life," cl-cl)

28. For representative passages of these discussions, see "Life," clxx-clxxiii (love of praise); cl (low opinion of women); and cl-cliii (strictness and formality of parenting). Barbauld's sympathy for Richardson sometimes leads her to displace blame for his faults onto other individuals or onto his social environment. She thus reports that "one lady who knew [Richardson] personally, imputes the formality of the family rather to Mrs. Richardson than to him. She was, by all accounts, a formal woman, but with a very kind heart" ("Life," clii-cliii), and she suggests that "we might find the origin of [his mean opinion of women], if we were in possession of the love letters he wrote for his female companions, in the early period of his life, with their dangers and escapes" (cl). This last explanation may reveal more about Barbauld's views on (women's) love letters than about Richardson's early study of female character, and it also echoes her dismissal of novels of amorous intrigue by Aphra Behn, Delarivier Manley, and the early Eliza Haywood (see "Life," xviii-xx; and "Origin," 34-5). "Novel of amorous intrigue" is Warner's term for late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century print entertainment focused on eroticised plots of seduction and disguise; see Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, esp. xii-xiv.

Barbauld does of course determine that more informal relations between parents and children are better. In the "Life" she unmistakably advocates "familiarity and confidence" between family members and cites "a very sensible letter" from Lady Bradshaigh in which the latter "objects, that in [Richardson's] writings, filial awe is too much inculcated" ("Life," cli-clii). Barbauld not only critiques the stern formality of Richardson's pedagogical style, but also questions his "high notions of filial . . . obedience," that is, his promotion of authoritarian, if benevolent, patriarchal family structures.

In the interest of her project to canonise Richardson as the father of the modern British novel, however, Barbauld could not dispense with his patriarchal stance entirely. As the father figure who had domesticated and moralised the British novel, he also needed to be in control of the morals of his extended family, and of its female members in particular. Barbauld therefore merely muted Richardson's affirmations of filial duty and of paternal rights, by cutting some of the more authoritarian passages from his letters. In the case of his quarrel with Wescomb, Barbauld excised from Richardson's letter of December 5 the passages in which he most strenuously asserted his paternal authority over Wescomb. Instead, Barbauld highlighted Richardson's "paternal indulgence" and his "love truly paternal" for Wescomb, and foregrounded those sections in which he located the source of familial unrest in Wescomb's own agency (*Correspondence* 3:298-9). In Barbauld's editorial hands, Richardson turned from a authoritarian patriarch into one who, though firm in his pedagogical methods and assertive of his pre-eminent familial status, guided the members of his extended family with a benevolent paternal hand.

Such interventions take us to the heart of Barbauld's editorial motivations. The primary focus in her editing of Richardson's correspondence, I have argued, was the moralising of his personal

character – the representation of Richardson as a virtuous man, a moral writer, and a benevolent father. This prepared readers for another goal of the published correspondence, a goal also present in her work on *The British Novelists* six years later: to canonise Richardson as the father of the modern British novel by grounding the morality of his novels and of his personal character in each other. Barbauld's project therefore required that she excise passages from Richardson's correspondence in which correspondents like Sarah Wescomb criticised or challenged the novelist's views on issues of domestic authority and moral character. Barbauld's remediation of Richardson's personal character accordingly entailed her intervention in broader discussions of moral character and patriarchal economies, interventions as much motivated by her conception of British culture as of Richardson's literary status or personal qualities.